

Turin. From industry to culture

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# Women · Architecture & Design Itineraries across Europe



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# MoMoWo

Women · Architecture & Design

Itineraries across Europe



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**MoMoWo**

## **Women · Architecture & Design Itineraries across Europe**

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# TURIN



WOMEN'S CREATIVITY SINCE  
THE MODERN MOVEMENT



## From Industry to Culture

Caterina Franchini

This chapter presents three itineraries which comprise twenty-one works situated in the city of Turin and two works in its metropolitan area.

The first itinerary focuses on the city centre, while the other two stretch north and south, outside Turin to Pino Torinese and Moncalieri where two significant buildings are accessible to visitors. The chapter includes an article about 'pioneer' Ada Bursi (1906–96) who was the first female professional architect to work in the city and it suggests other works to be visited beyond the ones included in the itineraries.

A brief introduction to each itinerary guides visitors along the routes which are rich in urban and architectural history. They can also experience the transformations which have significantly changed Turin's vocation and identity since 1980s as it has developed alternatives to its industrial image. It used to be the epitome of a company town, but over the last few decades it has become one of those medium sized European cities to have significantly changed its urban landscape. The city centre is the first urban area to have progressively consolidated its cultural attractiveness over time. The works in Itinerary 2 and Itinerary 3 are closely connected to the crucial steps of Turin's transformations including the reuse of the FIAT (*Fabbrica Italiana Automobili Torino*) factory Lingotto (1982), the approval of the Land Use Plan (*Piano Regolatore Generale* - PRG) in 1995, and the works for the Winter Olympic Games in 2006. This is the why, women architects' contribution is mainly seen in restorations, renovations, reuses, extensions, interior and museum set design.

Ten architectural works from the three itineraries received the Architetture Rivelate Prize. This local annual prize was established in

2004 by the Order of Architects - OAT (*Ordine degli Architetti Pianificatori, Paesaggisti e Conservatori della Provincia di Torino*). The prize aims to raise awareness and give visibility to those works that provide a better quality of built environment thanks to their careful architectural design and coherent realisation. It also aims to encourage observers to appreciate and enjoy architecture, even though they are just visitors or passers-by. A plaque on the wall of the prize winning building shows the 'extraordinary quality of ordinary architecture' to both local people as well as MoMoWo visitors. Among the women architects in Turin itineraries, Laura Petrazzini Levi (1931–86), author of Residence Du Parc (Itinerary 3), is included in the "Albo d'Onore del Novecento. Architetti a Torino" (Honour Roll of the 20th century. Architects in Turin). Her work has been recognised for its originality and her ability to give consistency to her architectural designs without losing sight of the numerous and varied distinctive traits. The Honour Roll was established in 1980 by OAT to celebrate and preserve the memory of professionals who have brought honour to the category with the quality of their work, commitment to culture and education, dedication to work, and participation in civic life.

Out of thirty-eight architects included in the Honour Roll, besides Petrazzini Levi, just two other women are mentioned. They are Vera Comoli Mandraci (1935–2006) and Mariella de Cristofaro Rovera (1931–2001). Both women distinguished themselves with their exceptionally ethical, human and professional rigour which also greatly highlighted their intensive scientific and academic achievements at the Politecnico di Torino. As they were both professors, Comoli in the fields of Urban History and de Cristofaro in Construction and Structural Engineering, transferred their passion and knowledge to generations of students, that are now architects.

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